



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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Cooling assistance available to needy families -- Application deadline is Aug. 15 --

Richmond – Applications for cooling assistance from the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) Energy Assistance Program will be accepted Wednesday, June 15, through Monday, Aug. 15, at local departments of social services.

“Summer heat and humidity can be very dangerous for children, the disabled and the elderly,” said VDSS Commissioner Anthony Conyers Jr. “Many low-income people need assistance with cooling their homes. We want them to know that this program can help.”

Assistance is available to households that include a child or children under age six, a disabled individual, or an adult age 60 and over who meet income and eligibility requirements.

Cooling assistance can be used to assist families and individuals with:

- payment of electric bills to operate cooling equipment
- payment of security deposits for electricity to operate cooling equipment
- repair of a central air conditioning system or heat pump
- purchase of a whole-house fan, including ceiling or attic fans
- the purchase and installation of a window unit air conditioner for households where there is no unit or where the unit must be replaced

The maximum monthly income to qualify for cooling assistance is \$1,037 before taxes for a household of one and \$2,097 before taxes for a family of four.

The Energy Assistance Program is funded by a federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program block grant. The fuel component has been in existence since 1979 and serves approximately 100,000 households each year across the Commonwealth, while the crisis component serves approximately 18,000 households. During the summer of 2004, the cooling component served approximately 35,000 households in Virginia.

To learn more visit <http://www.dss.state.va.us/benefit/energyasst.html>. Families and individuals must apply at their local department of social services by Aug. 15.

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